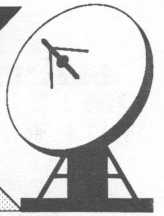


MATWATCH

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VOL. 4, NO. 29

JULY 22-28

Puts Gag on Sheets

HERD: "TIRED OF BEING BEATEN UP"

ATLANTA---WCW executive vice president Jim Herd has castigated what he calls "ridiculous and erroneous reporting" about the company's recent negotiations with former world champion Ric Flair and says he's suspending relations with bulletin writers.

"I've tried to be fair. I've tried to be cooperative," said Herd. "But I'm just tired of being beaten up all the time."

But Herd gave to MATWATCH WCW's side of the stalemate which led to Flair's firing from the promotion after seven reigns over ten years as world champion.

"The stories that have been written about us wanting him to take a massive pay cut are exaggerated and completely erroneous and you can tell that to all the other sheets," said Herd, though Charleston, S.C., and Charlotte, N.C., newspapers quoted Flair and his attorney Dennis Guthrie as saying the 43-year-old competitor was being asked to take a "50% pay cut" for the years 1992-94.

"We even offered him his old contract at astronomical bucks (a reported \$15,000-a-week) through next May and his attorneys just started making outrageous demands," said Herd. "He wanted things written into the contract you just can't do---and all these assurances about how he was gonna be used." When asked if the assurances had to deal with Flair's future relationship with booker Dusty Rhodes, Herd said: "I'm not going to go into that."

"We (reportedly Herd and WCW president Jack Petrik) told him he'd be well taken care of for those two additional years and we meant it. And he wasn't going to have to take the kind of cut you guys have been reporting."

Herd was interviewed about the Flair situation on NBC's GEORGE MICHAEL SPORTS MACHINE July 14 but sources from the MICHAEL show say Turner Broadcasting legal personnel complained to Michael about his

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Hulk: "I Do Not Take Steroids"

VINCE, HOGAN: TRUTH OR P.R. CONSEQUENCES?

Having spent five years of my life in public relations for two major universities, I am well-versed on two schools of thought on handling a crisis: say nothing or take to a well-planned, truth-cultivated offensive.

In an academic, ultra-conservative environment such as a college, the quiet road is the predominant one taken, usually on the advice of in-house attorneys. But the World Wrestling Federation is accredited by the college of P.T. Barnum. Its entire rise to dominance has been one evolving, painstakingly-crafted public relations and marketing masterpiece worthy of case studies in a college classroom. But virtually all of its image has been based on the positive and a focus, albeit fictitious, on "wholesome, family entertainment."

But aside from isolated flareups with the Ken Patera-Masanori Saito police confrontation, a death of a WWF jobber (Rick McGraw) of steroid abuse and the infamous Jim Duggan-Iron Sheik drug arrests, the WWF has not faced a national crisis of the dimension of the George Zahorian steroid trial revelations and its potential focus on the owner and lead character of this eight-year-old circus. Titan Sports has decided to take to the offensive, though on its terms, and again with an orchestrated p.r. campaign which has portrayed little remorse, few specifics and nervous responses from the organization's star.

The first step began July 14 with a "Backtalk" response from WWF owner Vincent K. McMahon Jr. in THE NEW YORK TIMES which hinted at media bias and basically defended his family's history in the wrestling business. McMahon followed last Monday night with the premiere of a series of one-minute messages on how some WWF performers had become "not only superstars but superheroes." He added: "The World Wrestling Federation has the most comprehensive drug testing, education and rehabilitation program in professional sports and that now will be expanded to include testing for anabolic steroids." McMahon went on to proclaim people could be assured a WWF program would be "drug-free." Of course, what is important to note here is PRIME TIME WRESTLING, lately the top-rated ring show on cable TV, is watched by an audience predominantly young and friendly to the WWF product, many of whom are likely unaware of the recent scandal. Any p.r. specialist will tell you McMahon's effort was primarily a reinforcement to his loyalists. It was subtly scheduled in the middle of PTW, placed the emphasis on a "just say no" theme, never acknowledged anything about the trial and was never mentioned again during the show. McMahon was Ronald Reagan and I'm sure hundreds of thousands were nodding approval at home, saying what a great guy Vince is to keep these guys clean.

The next day exposed severe flaws in the Titan campaign. McMahon called a news conference at the Plaza Hotel in New York, which revealed little more specific about his testing program---such as how, where or when it will begin or whether its results will be publicly disclosed. ENTERTAINMENT TONIGHT ran brief excerpts Tuesday night but other than a perceptive TIMES reporter, no

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HERD ANSWERS

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use of clips of the Lex Luger-Barry Windham finish on the program.

Herd reiterated that the situation was regrettable but when asked if a last-minute resumption of talks is possible, he firmly said, "No. We just told him we'd gone through this long enough and it was time for him to move on and do something else."

At deadline, speculation was mounting of an imminent signing of Flair by Titan Sports for a possible SUMMER SLAM debut but a close friend of Flair's was still insisting Flair would not go to New York.

Asked if the Flair controversy would hamper Luger's ability to draw as champion, Herd said: "Who knows? You'll have to make that judgment with the Bash crowds this summer compared to what we did last summer."

THIS WEEK'S HEADLINES

BASH BUY-RATE LOWEST EVER

ATLANTA---Percentage-wise, it was the lowest-ever reported for a WCW pay-per-view show but THE GREAT AMERICAN BASH was still a profitable show.

Available in an estimated 15.2 million homes, preliminary figures show the BASH scored a 1.0 percent buy-rate, down slightly from the 1.1 of SUPERBRAWL and WRESTLE WAR '91. But the show was seen in an estimated 152,000 homes---more than the prior two.

Based on an average \$19.95 cost, along with late-buy additions, the BASH grossed an estimated \$3.05 million.

U.S. TOURNEY SKEDDED FOR FINAL BASH CARD

ATLANTA---In one of two WCW titles to be decided by tournament, the U.S. heavyweight championship, vacated by Lex Luger's world title win, will be filled in a one-night tournament at The Omni Aug. 25.

Entered are Barry Windham, Nikita Koloff, Sting, Bobby Eaton, Steve Austin, Arn Anderson, Dustin Rhodes, Yellow Dog, Diamond Studd, Tom Zenk and, likely, Johnny B. Badd.

WCW host Jim Ross lambasted the latter six selections on THE WRESTLING HOTLINE Saturday night, saying some either were not in or did not deserve to be in the WCW top ten.

STEVE BEVERLY

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journalist posed a serious challenge to McMahon...until John Arezzi. The host of New York's PRO WRESTLING SPOTLIGHT had been denied credentials to the conference under his real name. Under an alias, Arezzi entered and asked why the "wrestling media" was not invited. McMahon said, "They were." Arezzi named a half-dozen wrestling journalists who had been excluded. An aide to WWF p.r. honcho Steve Planamenta then approached Arezzi, with a thinly-veiled threat of withdrawing advertising from Arezzi's radio station. Arezzi taped the exchange and excerpts aired on New York radio newscasts and Arezzi's show. Freelance writer Irv Muchnick was invited late to the confab while in California but an emissary for Muchnick was barred. The whole escapade was reminiscent of Richard Nixon's "Operation Candor" in the late stages of Watergate.

In my view, the least effective---other than with those who believe "WWF, right or wrong"---was Hulk Hogan's Tuesday night bit on THE ARSENIO HALL SHOW. July 13, I was asked on WFAN in New York by Jody MacDonald, "If Hulk Hogan were to come clean and acknowledge what the judge in Harrisburg would not let come to light, couldn't he save their reputation?" I said, "If Hogan were contrite and admits any connections with steroids, yes, because of his star power." As I see it, Hogan---without prepared script---was nervous (he used the word "basically" 22 times to preface remarks, a sign of tension in any communicator) and offered hardly confidence-inspiring testimony (a point disputed by a close mat friend), though a sympathetic studio audience and lethargic home viewers likely bought it.

Hogan blasted media links of him to the Zahorian case (the TIMES named him as one of the five wrestlers Zahorian sold steroids to from 1988-90) and called some of the trial testimony "lies." Hogan produced a picture of his youth baseball days, claiming to be 196 pounds at 10 years old (insiders say he was 13 in the pic) and said the only steroid he has ever taken was for a bicep injury in the mid-1980s. "I went through sports therapy and used prescription drugs, anti-inflammatories and a basic male hormone---which is, basically, a steroid." Hogan dodged Hall's question if Zahorian was his doctor and said, "I'm not ashamed of anything I've done."

First, Hall is hardly a news interviewer. Second, Hogan was way off base claiming the WWF is the "only entertainment company that tests for drugs." I can name at least 25 big-market TV stations who do. WCW does, though not for steroids. When Hogan said, "The WWF wants to stay on the sports pages and be the role model for the NFL, whose steroid tests have a hole in the bottom of the bucket," he was not specific as to how Titan's is better. I nearly collapsed when Hogan told Hall, "I don't know anything about growth hormones." No accusation here, mind you. But to contend he knows nothing about HGH? He must take us for fools. Further, his labeling Bruno Sammartino and Superstar Billy Graham as "complete hypocrites, when Bruno says I doubt if Hulk Hogan's ever seen the inside of a church," clearly is an attempt to diffuse the issue. A weak and dangerous one, considering the following Sammartino still has.

Hall jokingly said, "Let me ask you the Mike Wallace question." This is no joke: I'd like to see Hogan and McMahon both submit to a Wallace inquisition. But, then again, we know that will never happen, don't we?

Guest Column

FAREWELL, FLAIR: TIME TO MOVE ON

By KIMBERLY MURPHY

Co-Host, PRO WRESTLING TALK, WCAO-AM/Baltimore

I never thought I'd live to see the day.

Ric Flair is no longer NWA/WCW world heavyweight champion. And this time, the separation looks permanent. The Great American Bash has seen Lex Luger defeat Barry Windham for the strap to lead the federation into a new era.

I say good. It's about time.

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VIDIOTS

July 15-21

(PORTLAND) - J.J. Funk draw vs. Mike Winner; (BLINDFOLD MATCH) Sandy Barr d. Al Madril but Al kicks pie in Sandy's face, cuts Barr's ear until J.J. saves w. cowbell; Mike Winner d. Larry Oliver by DQ when Grappler/Dirty White Boy run in but Winner saves Larry; Doug Masters vs. Bart Sawyer in progress as show ends; (ANGLE) Fans vote Bart winner in "sing-off" vs. Grappler when Sawyer sings "Bad, Bad Leroy Brown." Masters and group of heels attack Bart. DRAW-PLUS.

(UWF) - [BEACH BRAWL/STRAP MATCH] Paul Orndorff d. Col. DeBeers; (CAPT. LOU'S CORNER) Blackhearts, Luna Vachon; (3/91) Mass Confusion d. Hog Calhoun/Cash Jackson. BOMB.

(SUNCOAST PRO) - Gator Gilmore d. Tom Sawyer; (ANGLE) Penelope Paradise signs to wrestle ref Frankie Reyes but with Boris Malenko as ref; Masked Superstar/Nasty Ned Brady vs. Dean Malenko/Tommy Rogers in progress as show ends. NO RATING.

(AAWF) - Big O d. Country Cuz; Jim Powell/Mr. Wrestling III d. Mercenaries by DQ when Joyce Grable hits III with helmet; Moondog Spot d. Dave Watts. BOMB.

(LPWA) - Terri Power d. Rusty Fox; Reggie Bennett d. Diane Von Hoffman; Team America d. Nasty Girls; Beast d. Cheryl Russa; Bad, Black & Beautiful d. Ilona Starr/Alma Alvarez; (REPLAY) Magnificent Mimi d. Bambi & brawl erupts after; (LOUISVILLE SLUGGER) Jim Cornette w. Bennett/Power.

(GLOBAL/SYN) - [MAJOR LEAGUE]: Makham Singh d. Ray Evans; Big Bully Busich d. Chaz; Buddy Landell d. Pvt. Terry Daniels; (NEWS CENTER) Craig Johnson/Scott Hudson review TV tourney; Rasta the Voodoomon d. Brian Adias when Brian hurts leg; Fantasma d. Sweet Daddy Falcone; (RECAP) TV tourney highlights; Jeff Gaylord d. Tugboat Taylor; (VIEWER COMMENT) Freddie Fargo says Singh will "rule Global." RESTHOLD-PLUS.

(PRO WRESTLING '91) - Billy Black draw vs. Steve Lawler; (LPWA) Bambi d. Candi Divine; (CLASSIC/BRUISER'S BEDLAM) Calypso Jim d. Don Kent; Joel Deaton d. Mad Dog Joe; (INTL/MEXICO) El Santos Sr. d. Black Shadow; (GA. TAG TITLE) Brute Force d. Chris Walker/Fabian for belts. RESTHOLD-PLUS.

(AWA: LOOKING BACK) - [1983] Fabulous Ones d. Larry Zbyszko/Mr. Saito; (20-MAN BATTLE ROYAL/1985) Bruiser Brody wins by eliminating Jerry Blackwell last. DRAW.

(IWCCW) - Curly Moe d. Boss Hogg; Tony Atlas/Scott Putski d. Power Twins; (IWCCW TITLE) Atlas d. Ivan Putski. RESTHOLD.

(GLOBAL/ESPN) - [Mon./TV Quarterfinals]: Singh d. Terry Garvin; Black d. Randy Rhodes; Walker d. Rip Rogers; Patriot d. Bill Irwin; Adrian Street d. Rasta by DQ when Rasta uses cane; Buddy Landell d. Busich with foot on top rope. DRAW.
[Tues.]: Highlights of first 2 rounds of tourney. NO RATING.
[Wed./TV Tourney]: {RECAP} 2nd round of tourney; (SEMI-FINALS) Patriot d. Black; Walker d. Singh by DQ when Makham hangs Chris w. turban; Landell d. Street w. feet on ropes; (FAN'S CORNER) Fan asks where is Patriot's hometown. He says everywhere; (ANGLE) Landell cheats way into bye for tourney finals during coin flip. DRAW.

[Thu.]: {BEST OF TV TOURNEY} Black d. Adias; Patriot d. Stan Lane; Singh d. Daniels; Walker d. Rogers; Street d. Rasta when

Voodomon uses cane; (FAN'S CORNER) Johnny asks if Landell colors his hair. Buddy denies it. NO RATING.

(WWF/USA) - [PRIME

TIME---Guest Host:

Sean Mooney]: (ANGLE)

Sherri Martel/Ted DiBiase in rage because Million \$ Belt is missing; Berserker d. Greg Valentine by countout using Fuji's cane; (UPDATE) Randy Savage proposes to Liz, "Match Made in Hell" preview; Paul Roma d. Jim Gorman; Big Bossman d. Louie Spiccoli; (SUMMER SLAM REPORT); Curt Hennig d. Larry Ludden; (GUEST) Virgil; (FUNERAL PARLOR) Paul Bearer w. Legion of Doom; (VIDEO) Steve Keirn as the Skinner; (GUEST) Andre the Giant narrates replay of knee injury by Earthquake, says he'll be out 10 months; (WWF TAG TITLE) Bushwhackers d. Nasty Boys by DQ but Nasties keep belts; Dino Bravo d. Shane Douglas; (McMAHON'S MOMENT) Vince announces expansion of WWF drug-testing to include anabolic steroids and proclaims WWF drug-free; Col. Mustafa d. Larry Williams & the Marauders whip & chair Larry after; Kerry Von Erich d. Barbarian; Warlord d. Buddy Wayne; Jim Duggan d. Mike Starr; (FINALE) Ted/Sherri search audience for belt. They find it on Jamieson but Andre/Virgil save Jamieson. Sherri snatches belt & tosses it to Ted but Andre/Virg yank Sherri around by hair. RESTHOLD-PLUS.

(WWF/SYN) - [CHALLENGE]: Von Erich d. Ed Moretti; Mountie d. Williams; Davey Boy Smith d. Starr; Warlord d. Wayne; Natural Disasters d. Ludden/Jones; (SUMMER SLAM REPORT); (BARBER SHOP) Brutus Beefcake w. Randy Savage. RESTHOLD.
[SUPERSTARS]: Bossman d. Spiccoli; (UPDATE) Gene Okerlund shows invitation to Randy/Liz wedding; (SEG) Vince's "drug-free" speech; (VIDEO) Skinner; Nasty Boys d. Rob Allen/Scott Carlson; Ricky Steamboat d. Tim Patterson; (INTERVIEW) Sgt. Slaughter learns Sid Justice is guest ref at SUMMER SLAM "Match Made in Hell;" Virgil d. Black Knight; Warlord d. Billy Gatlin; Beverly Brothers d. Gorman/Matthew Burns. RESTHOLD.

(WCW/TBS) - [POWER HOUR]: {BASH/WCW WORLD TITLE} Lex Luger d. Barry Windham to win vacant belt; (POST-MATCH) Luger tells why he's aligned w. Harley Race/Curtis Hughes; Michael Hayes/Bradstreet d. Tim Parker/Mike Jackson; Steve Austin d. Kerry Booth; Bobby Eaton d. Alan Martin; (WNN) Gordon Solie w. Freebirds/Bradstreet d. Junkyard Dog/Tommy Rich to win belts when Ricky Morton refuses to team with JYD/TR, Morton turn on Robert Gibson; Morton d. Chris Sullivan; One Man Gang d. John Peterson; Diamond Studd d. Kenny Kendall. RESTHOLD.

[WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP]: {ANGLE} Arn Anderson/Larry Zbyszko challenge for U.S. tag belts; {U.S. TAG TITLE} Freebirds d. Tom Zenk/Gibson when Studd knocks Zenk off top rope; (BASH) Luger-Windham & post-match; Ron Simmons d. Greg Avery; Arn/Larry z d. Johnny Rich/Scott Allen; OMG d. Joey Maggs; Windham d. Black Bart; (CONTROL CENTER) Solie announces Steiners stripped of world tag belts; (REPLAY) El Gigante-Kevin Sullivan cutting each other's hair; Johnny B. Badd d. Larry Santo; (HANDICAP) Nikita Koloff d. Tim Hughes/Mike Maverick; Austin d. Jim Manning. RESTHOLD-PLUS.

[MAIN EVENT]: Zenk d. Rogers; (BASH clips); Hardliners d. Maggs/Ricky Nelson; (DANGER ZONE) Paul E. picks Enforcers to win world tag title; (WCW TV TITLE) Austin d. Chad Floyd; Badd d. Jackie Fulton; (MASK MATCH) Curtis Hughes d. Yellow Dog but Brian Pillman comes to ring & takes Dog away. DRAW.

(WCW/SYN) - [WCW PRO]: (BASH) Same clips as TBS; Simmons d.

SCALE: PINEALL - Must See. PILEDRIVER - Excellent. POWERSLAM - Good. DRAW - Average. RESTHOLD - Fair. BOMB - Poor. PLUS - Midscale rating.

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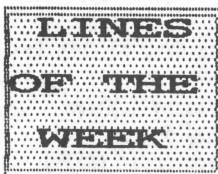
Sam Cody; Hardliners d. Sam Houston/Rick Ryder; (LARRY Z's LEGENDS) J.B. Badd kisses Lar; P.N. News d. Paul Lee; (DEMO) Bill Kaszmeier w. dumbbell pumps; Zenk/Yellow Dog d. Studd/Austin by DQ when Studd pushes Dog off top. RESTHOLD. [WORLD WIDE]: (BASH clips); Arn/Larry Z d. J. Rich/Ian West-on; otherwise, no report. NO RATING.

(USWA/WMC) - Randy Harris d. Don Kelly; Awesome Kong d. T.D. Steel; (PIPKIN BLDG/MUDHOLE TAG MATCH) Tony & Kim Anthony no contest vs. Tom Prichard/Miss Texas as both men fall in mud, then Eric Embry runs-in, dumps Kim in. Anthony saves & pummels Eric until Tojo Yamamoto tosses Eric chain & he decks Tony; (PIPKIN/USWA TAG TITLE) Jeff Jarrett/Robert Fuller d. Barroom Brawlers to regain belts; Leatherface d. Chris Frazier & Jerry Lawler saves after Leather goes after Frazier w. chainsaw; (ANGLE) Embry grabs Michael St. John but Anthony bashes Embry from behind w. board; Tony Anthony/Danny Davis draw vs. Prichard/Chris Candido. A/D win first fall but Tony DQ'd in second for continuous bashing of Chris. RESTHOLD.

(IWF) - Lou Perez d. Tom Sawyer when Cliff Anderson accidentally hits Tom w. TV belt; Master Blaster d. Dave Johnson; Heartbreakers d. Crocodile Mackenzie/Carribbean Kid; (SEG) 'Breakers at Mel's Diner; Incredible Thor d. Mike DeBacco; Thunder & Lightning d. Ric Diamond/Nuclear Assassin by DQ when Champagne Cane runs in & 'Breakers-T&L brawl erupts; Dynamite Express d. Bad Boys by DQ. DRAW.

(UIW) - Tom Brandi d. Bob Wissman; The Surgeon d. Ric Savage; Sledgehammer McGill/Mr. Bojangles d. Cream Team; Neil Superior d. Black Ranger; King Kahlua d. Reggie Royce; Harley Watkins d. Red Ranger; A.J. Fritzoid d. Axl Rotten by DQ when Steve Valentino runs in & chairs A.J. Axl splashes twice until Kirk Dredd saves. DRAW.

(LUCHA LIBRE) - Tony Acree/El Vulcano/La Beatia Salvaje draw vs. Oro/Plata/Platino w. double pin in 3rd fall; Anibal/Ringo Mendoza/Casanova el Vampiro Canadiense d. Maskara/MSI/Herodes 2-3 falls; Chavo/Mando/Eddy Guerrero d. El Cachorro Mendoza/Apolo Dantes/Javier Cruz 2-3 & Cruz walks out on team before 3rd fall; Atlantis/La Mano Negra/La Mascara Sagrada d. Fuerza Guerrera/Pierroth Jr./El Gran Markus Jr. 2-3. POWERSLAM.



1. Hulk Hogan, ARSENIO HALL SHOW: "This isn't a Lyle Alzado story you're gonna hear." 2. Hogan, AHS: "The WWF wants to stay on the sports pages and be the role model for the NFL, whose steroid tests have a hole in the bottom of the bucket." 3. Buddy Landell, GLOBAL: "My hair's naturally blond. I dye my roots black to give them something to gripe about." 4. Landell, GLOBAL: "Sean Connery calls up and asks me about women." 5. Scott Hudson, GLOBAL: "Buddy Landell just barely missed the '84 Olympics. His TV was broken." 6. Hudson/Craig Johnson, GLOBAL, on Chris Walker bearhugging Makham Singh: (SH) "It's like wrapping your arms around a Volkswagen." (CJ) "I was thinking more like a Volkswagen bus." (SH) "If he's a bus, I don't think anyone's steering him." 7. Roddy Piper, WWF-SU, on Jerry Saggs: "He'd eat corn through a picket fence." 8. Hudson, GLOBAL: "I don't want to hear Rasta the Voodoomon talk. I may have to grow some hair. Then again..." 9. Paul E. Dangerously, WCW: "Gigante knew the Lady of the

3rd Eye but she was some chick from Argentina with a pimple in the middle of her nose." 10. Bobby Heenan, PTW, on missing belt: "Sherri, strip-search Alfred."

11. Hogan, AHS: "We're entertainment, folks!" 12. Hudson, GLOBAL, on Singh: "He's a heckuva promotion for Taco Bell." 13. Johnson/Hudson, GLOBAL: (CJ) "The Abdominizer works on Chris Walker." (SH) "Yeah, and Makham's eaten a couple of 'em." 14. Hudson, GLOBAL, on Landell: "He cheated in kindergarten---the 3 hardest years of his life." 15. Paul E., WCW: "Santo will go down faster than Don Mattingly's batting average." 16. Heenan, PTW, on Jamieson leaving studio: "If you can't sit down, wear a Pamper." 17. Hudson, MLW: "Tug Taylor was driving down I-75 in Georgia in a Yugo and they made him pull over at a weigh station." 18. Hawk, WWF-SU, on Nasty Boys: "Your porchlights are not on." 19. Jerry Lawler, WMC, on Reggie B. Fine: "You're so full of ignorance, it's coming out of your mouth." 20. Hudson, MLW, on Landell: "He served in Operation Buddy---which was checking out every restaurant in South Florida."

21. Johnson/Hudson, MLW: (CJ) "The Bullyblaster isn't a heart punch." (SH) "And the Pope isn't Catholic." 22. Eddie Mansfield, IWF: "That Nasty Ronnie is a sick individual. He wants to sleep with Norman Bates' stepmother." 23. Jim Cornete, LPWA: "Double derriere drops. Double clotheslines. I feel like I'm doing a chewing gum commercial." 24. Cornette, LPWA, on The Beast: "I'd like to take her to McDonald's just to watch the sign change." 25. Reggie Bennett, LPWA, to Cornette: "Yellow is a good color for you."

STRONGEST COMMENTS - 1. Vince McMahon, PTW: "The standards of excellence the athletes in the WWF live by will become the standardbearer for all of professional sports for years to come." 2. Hogan, AHS: "Superstar Billy Graham and Bruno Sammartino have become complete hypocrites." 3. Ross, BASH: "Looks like Oz is headed back down the yellow brick road where he belongs." 4. Hudson, GLOBAL: "Buddy Landell made so many people mad in Florida, he has to wrestle in the GWF because he's out of options." 5. Arn Anderson, WCW, on Freebirds: "I don't see a wrestler among you." 6. Lex Luger, WCW: "The past has been forgotten." 7. Ross, WRESTLING HOTLINE, on U.S. tourney entrants: "Maybe the championship committee needs some young blood." 8. Cornette/Terri Power, LPWA: (JC) "Name me one thing money won't buy." (TP) "A body for you."

QUESTIONS OF THE WEEK - 1. Johnny (fan), GLOBAL: "Does Buddy Landell color his hair?" 2. Ross, WCW: "Did he (OMG) go to Floyd Lawson's College of Barbering in Mayberry?" 3. Cornette, LPWA: "Reggie...what kind of a name is that for a woman? What was your mother's name...George?"

NICKNAMES OF THE WEEK - 1. MICHELIN MAN (Hudson on Singh). 2. THE ULTIMATE AMERICAN (Hudson on Patriot). 3. LEON (Piper on Jerry Saggs). 4. THE UNWRAPPED PACKAGE (Hudson on Bus-ich). 5. MR. PEROXIDE (Hudson on Landell). 6. HUMAN BILLY GOAT (Anderson on Daddy Dink). 7. BEARDED LADY (Arn on Jimmy Garvin). 8. VALEDICTORIAN OF CHARLES MANSON HIGH (Ross on Sullivan). 9. GOONEY (Heenan on Sean Mooney).

MR. SINCERE AWARDS - 1. Vince McMahon, PTW: "It should come as no surprise to you that the WWF has one of the most comprehensive drug testing, education and rehabilitation programs in all of sports." 2. Hogan, AHS: "I don't know anything about growth hormones."

BEST PICTURES - 1. GLOBAL/ESPN, Landell cheating during
(Continued on Page 6)

GUTSY JOHN: On PRO WRESTLING SPOTLIGHT, John Arezzi re-played the tape of the exchange between himself and a WWF p.r. official after he challenged why Vince McMahon excluded the "wrestling media" from his news conference at the Plaza Hotel. It was interesting and revealing, to say the least.

FINAL BASH POLL: 216 calls, one of the biggest MATWATCHer responses ever on a PPV show. Results: 88.4% negative, 8.3% positive, 3.3% so-so or no opinion.

BASH \$\$\$: This year's show took in \$99,000, the largest gross for a WCW live gate this year but on 5,500 paid (6,790 in the Baltimore Arena), compared to 8,830 paid last year.

HERD'S ALTERATIONS: Jim Herd told us Friday he is going to reformat the WCW TV shows himself. "If my people don't like it, they'll just have to beat me up about it," said Herd. But he says he will simplify the formats: "I'm tired of seeing a piece of tape replayed 13 times, no matter how good it is."

ON THE BASH: "I'd rate it a '5,'" said Herd. "It had some good wrestling. Sting against Nikita would have been a heck-uva match without the chain and Luger and Windham were tremendous."

ON THE OTHER HAND: Herd doesn't want to see any more scaffold matches. "If P.N. News had fallen off that thing, it would have killed him," said Herd. The WCW boss agreed the finish was confusing. "That kind of match absolutely adds nothing to wrestling and I've had enough of it."

THE MISSY MESS: After six weeks of billing the Paul E.-Missy showdown, some WCW insiders say the promotion failed to check on a Maryland State Athletic Commission rule barring any contact between men and women; hence, the Hardliners "kidnap."

BUT THE BOSS SAYS: "I'm the one that put an end to that," said Herd. "I don't want to see that kind of thing (Missy-Paul E.) again---ever! I don't want any announcers involved in any physical contact or angles...particularly her (Hyatt). I don't want to see any more of that stuff with her and Jason Hervey. All of that stuff is a crock, anyway."

MAGNUM'S STAND: Other insiders say Hervey had a tiff with Terry Allen about his not being involved in the final match and Magnum reportedly said, "Tough." By the way, Hervey (and, we assume, Missy) was to appear on the canceled PARTY MACHINE WITH NIA PEEPLES Wednesday night with a rerun skedded Sept. 3.

A FINAL NOTE: Herd was also unhappy with the unsold ringside seats which appeared on the Scaffold Cam several times. "The promoter didn't sell all the ringside seats in camera range. They were so sure on Sunday morning there would be a big walkup and it just didn't happen," said Herd. "I don't care if they cut the prices from the 12th row back as long as they sell them."

POST-BASH CROWDS: A turnout of 1,000 in Farmland IN and others in the range of 800-1,500 pre-weekend.

LPWA ADD-ONS: LPWA now on Channel 30 in Memphis and WMTU in Jackson TN at 6:30 a.m. Saturdays. Stations planning a three-hour LPWA/Global/WWF SUPERSTARS block in the fall.

MONDAY IN MEMPHIS: Awesome Kong was the newest challenger for Jerry Lawler's USWA belt. He was used in a match and angle Saturday on WMC to get him over.

ALSO MONDAY: Eric Embry vs. Tony Anthony; Jeff Jarrett and Robert Fuller vs. Barroom Brawlers in a "barroom brawl match;" Tom Prichard put up the Texas title vs. Bill Dundee (makes a lot of sense to defend a state belt out-of-state); Danny Davis defended the light heavy title vs. Brian Christopher; and Doug Gilbert in the opener against Heartbreaker Randy Harris.

WFAN LISTENERS: Thanks for the tremendous response after our guest shot with Jody MacDonald and Rich Mancuso the night before the BASH. We've heard from more than 150 of you and your letters have been most kind.

KATZ CALLING: Larry Katz's new home on WCAO-AM in Baltimore gives him a far greater reach in the DelMarVa region. He had his whole family of regulars for a second anniversary last Sunday (new time 10 p.m.-12 midnight).

WHAT'S YOUR NUMBER?: I've been asked my many MATWATCHers to publish the times and call-in numbers for the respective radio shows. Even if they live out of range, many of them want to participate. Help me out, guys. Jim Ross' line (9-10 p.m. ET) on WSB/Atlanta Sundays is 1-800-WSB-TALK for all out-of-staters (1-800-972-8255).

RECOVERING: Ross missed his first taping in at least seven years last Monday. He had to be rushed to the emergency room of a Baltimore hospital after the BASH. A kidney stone flared up and crystallized. Jim was in enormous pain during the Sting-Koloff and Luger-Windham matches and was laid up for a couple of days.

GLOBAL TEAMS: GWF tapes its tag tourney Friday and Saturday (TV tourney finals aired Monday on ESPN). Among entries: Stan Lane & Billy Joe Travis (watch for a split here), Jim Brunzell & Firecat (Brady Boone), Johnny Ace/Bill Irwin, Royal Family, Iceman Parsons/Hammer, Chris Walker/Steve Simpson, Patriot (Del Wilkes)/Pvt. Terry Daniels, Handsome Stranger/Chaz.

A LITTLE BEEF: Wet & Wild (Sonny Beach and Steve Ray) from UWF is also skedded for the Global tourney. Herb Abrams told them if they do the GWF show, they're out of UWF and Sonny & Steve apparently told Herb tough stuff.

MORE CARTEL: Scotty the Body (Scott Levy) will be renamed The Palm Beach Gigolo and join The Cartel in Global. Some thought had been given to the Palm Beach Heartthrob because Pedicino would like to bring in Austin Idol for a feud.

BAD NEWS: Bad News Allen/Brown (Allen Coage) will work Global's North American title tourney simply as Bad News.

CHANGING FACES: Fabian loses a loser-leave Georgia All-Star match to Steve Lawler and will return in his new Handsome Stranger masked character.

NUMBERS TRIVIA: Scott Hudson did color on 48 matches taped from Friday through Sunday in Dallas and Atlanta, which rivals a Jim Ross endurance record. Craig Johnson was seen on Global, UIW and Georgia All-Star in the same weekend. Only Gordon Solie, who once did World Championship, Florida, Continental and the old Angelo Poffo ICW in the same weekend has ever appeared on more different promotions in that time period.

(More MATWATCHING on Page 6)

MATWATCH

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RATINGS RAP

GUEST COLUMN

(From Page 2)

Having suffered through three abortive attempts (Rick Steamboat, Flair's so-called "face" turn and Sting) to redefine the image of NWA/WCW champion in the past two years---attempts that might have worked had the NWA/WCW not been so

eager to cower to an increasingly erratic star---I'm ready for a new champion. I'm ready for the WCW to finally rid itself of the obnoxious image of a haughty standardbearer who can't seem to win his matches for himself. I'm ready for a WCW spokesman who can be marketed effectively--and in this era, marketing image is everything.

This is not to downgrade Flair's contribution to the sport. Flair has always been one of the finest technicians in tights and can still put on a truly great show when he wants to. But increasingly, he hasn't wanted to. His recent matches have been sleepwalks, timefillers designed to get the job done and still get to Sabatino's (a Baltimore restaurant) on time. Flair will be missed. But not for long.

Farewell, Ric Flair. We wish you well. But it's time to move forward. And with Lex Luger at the forefront, the WCW may finally do just that.

IDIOTS

(From Page 4)

coin flip. 2. GLOBAL/ESPN, Black slamming Patriot on Globaldome stage. 3. WWF-SU, Saggs biting Carlson's armpit. 4. WCW, Zenk impersonating Garvin. 5. UIW, Axl Rotten juices.

ALL-CLICHE TEAM - 1. Eric Bischoff, WCW PRO: "...too close for comfort." 2. Bischoff, WCW PRO: "...well-oiled machine."

HYPE AWARDS - 1. Hudson, GLOBAL, on TV tourney: "It's like March Madness in the NCAA." 2. Sean Mooney, PTW: "We just saw a great match involving Col. Mustafa."

SAY WHAT? - Ross/Hyatt, WCW: Missy saying she "did what I said I'd do" and Ross saying she was "successful." Must have taped this before the BASH. Seems I remember Missy being hauled off before her match.

THE LAST WORD???: Jim Herd had plenty to say on the Vince/Hogan steroid campaign. On Hogan's ARSENIO shot: "He's stupid to go on like that. The whole thing's orchestrated and just ONCE, I'd like to see a sportswriter or entertainment writer expose that." On testing: "Sure, Vince will tell you he's going to do all of this extensive testing but is he going to tell you who passes and who doesn't? He's only going to tell you what he wants you to know!"

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HO-HUM! PRIME TIME STAYS ATOP HEAP

The chase to find a missing Million Dollar Belt was enough to power WWF PRIME TIME WRESTLING to its fifth straight win of the weekly Nielsen cable ratings race. But all other shows either took a plunge or stayed flat.

All weekend mat shows may have followed the pattern of mainline sports. The weekend of July 13-14 was the lowest-rated in network TV sports history. Saturday and Sunday WWF and WCW shows only averaged a 1.9, tied for the lowest ever.

PRIME TIME scored a 3.1 rating and 5.2 per cent share of audience, up 3 per cent over the previous outing. But PTW was down 3% from the same date last year.

ALL-AMERICAN WRESTLING dipped to a 2.3/7.4 in its Sunday slot, down 8% from last week and off 12% from last year.

WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP WRESTLING, on the eve of the BASH pay-per-view and with the furor over the Ric Flair departure, could only muster a 2.1, down 5% from July 6. But WCW was up substantially from its 1.3 on the date last year when it was moved to a 4:05 slot with little promo.

The BASH did not get a boost from WCW MAIN EVENT, which fell to a 1.9 in the hour before the PPV. The rating was off 27% from its last airing and down 37% from last year.

POWER HOUR stayed flat at 1.4 from last week and last year.

CABLE

Week Ending July 15	Rating/Share	Homes	Year Ago
WWF PRIME TIME (USA 7/15)	3.1/5.2	1.76 million	3.2/5.2
WWF ALL-AMERICAN (USA 7/14)	2.3/7.4	1.20 million	2.6/8.0
WCW WORLD CHAMP. (TBS 7/13)	2.1/5.7	1.19 million	1.3/3.6
WCW MAIN EVENT (TBS 7/14)	1.9/4.9	1.09 million	3.0/7.4
WCW POWER HOUR (TBS 7/13)	1.4/6.8	805,000	1.4/2.8

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MATWATCHING

(From Page 5)

NEW CHAMPS: A crowd of 350 turned out for the SUNCOAST PRO tapings Saturday night at Palmetto FL. Two titles changed

hands: Lou Perez d. Nasty Ned Brady for the SUNCOAST Southern belt and Masked Superstar d. Full Force for the Florida title when Jumbo Baretta threw in the towel for Full.

(Continued on Next Column)